



THE HANDEL INSTITUTE

NEWSLETTER

The Handel Institute is 25 years old! We mark our birthday with an extra-large issue of the *Newsletter*, which really does contain something for everyone. A summary of the Institute's history, by Donald Burrows, is followed by: a research article by Ruth Smith on *Rinaldo*, delving into the opera's reference to British military activity; an account of this year's London Handel Festival; a joint report on the Göttingen

and Halle festivals; the programme of the conference in November on 'Handel at Court' (plus abbreviated abstracts of the papers), and two brief but thrilling announcements – one about a 'new' Handel manuscript at the Coke Collection, the other about the recent relaunch of the *ghandel.org* website, which is now, as they, up and running.

Colin Timms

OUR FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

The formal existence of The Handel Institute began with the Trust Deed dated 18 March 1987, so this is the year of our Silver Anniversary and it provides an opportunity for recollection and reflection on the Institute's history and activities.

The foundation of the Institute was the culmination of a process that had been gathering momentum in the early 1980s, and it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when that process began. An important moment was the conference session (and subsequent related meetings) on 'The Future of Handel Research' on 13 November 1982 at the Maryland Handel Festival, led by papers by Anthony Hicks and Howard Serwer. The principal topic on that occasion was the current state of the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, with serious concerns about the backlog of unpublished material and the quality of scholarly presentation in this collected edition, compared with those of Bach and Mozart. There were practical difficulties arising from the production of the HHA from the eastern side of the Iron Curtain, but in the background were two fundamental problems: the necessary expertise and resources were distributed in different countries, and the edition had yet to tackle the large and complex problems associated with the presentation of Handel's Italian operas and English oratorios.

Over the following twelve months there were informal follow-up meetings of British Handelians. The possibility of a London-based collected edition was investigated, but a diplomatic excursion to Halle in November 1983 initiated a new international collaboration. Some way was needed to set up an arrangement that would override national legal and financial restrictions. In order to form a channel for the British contribution to the enterprise, a Provisional Council was formed, with Gerald Hendrie as chairman and Anthony

Hicks as secretary. Beyond the question of the edition, it became apparent that there would be many benefits, to performance as well as to scholarship, if individuals with interests in or around Handel and his music could be brought together in an institutional framework, and momentum was reinforced by the London events in European Music Year (1985). At this time Handel societies were also being founded or rejuvenated in America, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Japan, but Tony Hicks insisted that what we needed was an Institute, not a Society, and (after seemingly interminable delays of legal process) the Institute came into existence, with Brian Trowell as chairman.

Thus the Institute, by origin and by continuing function, exists to co-ordinate expertise in Britain relating to Handel and his music, and to do so in the context of an international collaboration with colleagues, particularly in Germany and America. At an early stage, our role in providing two members of the Editorial Board of the HHA was written into the constitutional arrangements for the edition and the Händelgesellschaft. Individually our Council members have also edited or monitored a considerable number of the volumes: at present Terence Best's *Silla* is scheduled for publication in 2014, Andrew Jones is undertaking the large task of the continuo-accompanied Italian cantatas and Reinhard Strohm is embarking upon *Scipione*.

Our activities quickly extended into other areas relating to our charitable object as expressed in the formal language then required for charity registration – the 'education of the public' on the subject of the music and career of Handel and his contemporaries. Our first conference, 'Handel Collections and their History' (1990), inaugurated a series (fundamentally, like the Crystal Palace Handel Festivals,



triennial, but modified to accommodate the Purcell-Handel celebrations in 2009) in which this November's meeting will be the ninth event. I have good recollections of every one of our conferences, both for the quality of the papers and for the benefits arising from international gatherings of Handelians. The conference periods also provide facilities for London meetings of the HHA Editorial Board.

Along with conferences came the inauguration of our twice-yearly *Newsletter*, now into Volume 23, and, slightly later, the introduction of study days. Although *Newsletter* articles are relatively modest in length, they have included many on important topics and have provided the opportunity for the speedy publication of current research, or the preservation and summation of accumulated experience. I think, for example, of Sir Thomas Armstrong's recollections of T. W. Bourne, Lucy Roe's disentangling of the biography of Robert Smith from the daunting array of persons of that name, and Graydon Beeks's recent elucidation of the history of the lists of the music and instruments at Cannons. Most of the study days have been held in Cambridge, providing a background to the biennial Handel opera productions directed there by our Trustee and Council member Andrew Jones, but more recently a study day in London was prompted by the Handel 'Collected Documents' project (of which, more anon).

Our association with European Music Year during the period of our foundation enabled us to establish a fund from which, in non-conference years, we have regularly offered research awards. Although not in the big league of research funding, these awards have assisted many people, often in the earlier stages of their career, to pursue particular projects, especially when distant travel or research materials were required. For a time we also had the opportunity to administer the Gerald Byrne Award for performers, and we continue to take an interest in issues relating to performance (beyond the practical implications of music editions).

A further role for the Institute came with participation in the arrangements for the maintenance of the Gerald Coke Handel Collection. Gerald Coke was the Institute's first patron: we had the benefit of his support and advice during our foundation, and it was entirely in line with our objects that we should be involved in securing the future of his Handel Collection. This turned out to be no easy matter, but since the end of the process two nominees of the Institute have been members of the Gerald Coke Handel Foundation, which provides financial support for the Collection, and others serve on its Collections Advisory Committee. Perhaps it is as important that our Council members are aware, from their own experience, of the research value of the Collection, which is housed at The Foundling Museum in London. Happily, the Institute also maintains a cordial and positive relationship with the Handel House Museum, though on a less formal basis, and has participated in, or initiated, a number of events there: another Trustee and Council member, Ruth Smith, is currently preparing an exhibition on Charles Jennens that opens in late November.

While the state of the HHA was a major concern at the

time of our foundation, we were also aware of several other important tasks that were overdue for attention, among them the production of an up-to-date successor to Otto Erich Deutsch's *Handel: A Documentary Biography*. This required resources on a scale that we could not command, but a generous donation from Winton Dean (establishing a fund that was to be used in the first instance for this project) prompted us to collaborate with the Open University in a successful application for a major grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, which enabled a dedicated research office to be established at the Camden branch of the OU. The massive task of the new 'Collected Documents' – well beyond the scope of the originally envisaged 'new Deutsch' – is now nearing completion, and the text of the first volume has been delivered to Cambridge University Press for publication.

In addition to these continuing activities, a new area has opened up as the result of Anthony Hicks's recent generous legacy to the Institute and a supplementary donation from Winton Dean. These provide both stability for the Institute's future and the possibility of establishing a physical base in which Tony's collection of books and music, photographic reproductions, recordings and research notes can be made accessible, with further potential to support more ambitious research programmes. Turning these possibilities into practical reality while maintaining our established commitments will be the major task of the next few years. No doubt we will need to adapt to changing conditions, but The Handel Institute has the prospect of an interesting and positive future during the next twenty-five years.

Donald Burrows

OPERA IN TEMPORE BELLII: ENGLISH TRADITIONS IN *RINALDO* REVISITED

Handel's *Rinaldo* was first performed at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, on 24 February 1711. Curtis Price's influential essay 'English Traditions in Handel's *Rinaldo*' makes a virtue of the inexact analogies that it draws between the opera and the politics of its time. While conceding that 'this broad analysis would appear to have a major drawback: the plot does not quite fit a template of contemporary events', Price argues that 'this very ambiguity, in contrast to the forthright, unequivocal politics of most of Handel's later operas, can be seen as yet another manifestation of the underlying Englishness of *Rinaldo*'.¹ *Rinaldo*'s Englishness is incontestable, and this article identifies records contemporary with the opera's composition and performance that suggest additional, less ambiguous, and equally English analogies.

¹ Curtis Price, 'English Traditions in Handel's *Rinaldo*', *Handel Tercentenary Collection*, ed. Stanley Sadie and Anthony Hicks (London, 1987), 120-37, at 131.



EUROPEAN WAR

Centring his political interpretation on the disputed succession to the British throne, Price does not name the ongoing War of the Spanish Succession (1701–13), but he alludes to it in suggesting that ‘the Crusaders ... could symbolize the northern Protestant alliance and the Saracens their Catholic opponents’.² Britain, like the crusaders in *Rinaldo*, was in a multinational alliance fighting an overseas war. That war was crucial to Britain’s survival as an independent nation, and its outcome would determine the balance of power in Europe. The coalition that included Britain had as one of its main aims the curbing of French expansion.

For the British audience of 1711 the pagans in *Rinaldo* would have been a very plausible analogy for the French. France was perceived as aiming at world domination and at imposing on Britain a hostile religion, Roman Catholicism, in place of the Protestant settlement that the 1689 Revolution had sought to secure. More readily than the awkward issue of Stuart versus Hanoverian succession (with the faulty analogy of the rightful possession of Jerusalem),³ the current contest of Catholic France versus Protestant Britain, with the routine analogy of ‘ungodly others’ versus ‘godly us’ (in this case Pagans = France, Crusaders = Britain), would effortlessly have come to the mind of Handel’s audience.

Price and others are inclined to regard the fleeting reference to religion in the opera, notably the brisk conversion of Armida and Argante at its end, as so slight as to be cynical at worst, perfunctory and tasteless at best.⁴ But for an age in which religious identity and citizen rights were fused, and at a time when the ongoing war was presented to the British public as a means of guaranteeing the latter by thwarting a feared attempt to destroy the former, the distinction that Price makes between civil and religious appears anachronistic.⁵ Handel’s audience needed little or no prompting to recognise the enemy/pagans/Saracens as models of the feared and hated French.⁶ The connection was current in public rhetoric: for example, in Bisse’s sermon for the 1710 wartime Fast, which invokes the restitution of Jerusalem.⁷

CULTURAL WAR

The contest with France was inscribed in cultural life as well. It has frequently been noted that in his dedication of the wordbook to Queen Anne, Aaron Hill (see Fig. 1) claimed *Rinaldo* as the foundation of a new native opera tradition that would eclipse its Italian parentage.⁸



Fig. 1: Henry Hulsbergh (Hulsberg), Aaron Hill, aged 24. © National Portrait Gallery, London. The image was used as the frontispiece to Hill’s account of the Ottoman Empire (see note 23).

Hill’s consciousness of other countries’ operas needing to be bested is apparent in his preface. He positions his subject-matter as worthwhile on the ground that it has been used Europe-wide: ‘I could not chuse a finer Subject than the celebrated Story of *Rinaldo* and *Armida*, which has furnish’d OPERA’s for every Stage and Tongue in *Europe*’. For cultural aficionados he did not need to instance France. Lully’s *Armide* (1686) was considered the composer’s masterpiece, and the author of another English *Armida* opera, John Dennis, had recently instanced it as a competitor:

... Then all you Sparks who have to Paris Rid,
And there heard Lullys Musical *Armide* ...⁹

² Ibid., 130–31.

³ Ibid., 131.

⁴ Ibid., 132; Winton Dean and John Merrill Knapp, *Handel’s Operas 1704–1726*, rev. edn (Oxford, 1995), 173.

⁵ Price, ‘English Traditions’, 132. For propaganda presenting the war as a defence of religious liberties see, for example, Thomas Knaggs, *A Sermon Preach’d ... on ... the Day Appointed ... for a General Fast and Humiliation* (London, 1710); Samuel Clarke, *A Sermon Preach’d ... on ... the Day of Thanksgiving for the Successes of the Fore-going Campaign* (London, 1710).

⁶ The enemy (It. *nemico*) are ‘pagan’ in the English translation, but readers of Edward Fairfax’s celebrated rendition of Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The Recoverie of Jerusalem* (London, 1600, and many later editions), would have known Armida and Argante as Saracens. On Hill’s intended translation of Tasso, see Price, ‘English Traditions’, 124.

⁷ Philip Bisse, *A Sermon Preach’d before the Honourable House of Commons ... on ... the Day Appointed by Her Majesty for a General Fast ... imploring God’s Blessing and Assistance ... in the Present War* (London, 1710), 6–7.

⁸ ‘... to see the English OPERA more splendid than her MOTHER, the Italian’: Aaron Hill, *Rinaldo* (London, 1711), Dedication.

⁹ John Dennis, *Rinaldo and Armida: A Tragedy: As it is Acted at the Theatre in Little-Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields* [a semi-opera] (London, 1699), Prologue.



Whoever wrote the puff in *The British Apollo* for the innovations at the Haymarket Theatre was also consciously invoking competition with France, confident of being understood by readers.¹⁰ The author was very likely Hill, instigator of the Haymarket improvements, given that he was the founder and until recently had been the owner, manager and editor of the magazine.¹¹ Though this 120-line poem has been cited for its descriptions of the Haymarket scenes and decorations,¹² its specifically political thrust has not, it seems, been noted:

First 'twas Whisper'd, then aloud,
Fame has sounded to the Crowd,
Wonders meant to please the Age,
Wonders on the **British Stage*:
Such as *Athens* ne'er cou'd boast,
Nor the whole *Italia Coast*;
Such as *Gallia* ne'er cou'd raise,
Tho' a Rival, fond of Praise. [lines 1-8]

[*The Improvement of the *Theatre*, in the *Hay-Market*, so much talk'd of]

Not only the distinguished archetype of opera, Greek tragedy ('Athens'), not only ancient Rome and modern Italy ('Italia') are surpassed; as a climax, British theatre puts 'Gallia', France, in the shade. Moreover, unlike the French, the British can afford it:

How to our Glory will it sound,
In all the Nighbo'ring Kingdoms round,
That while *War* with wild Devastations,
Sinks and oppresses other Nations;
We, as not Sinking by its Rage,
With Minds serene approach the *Stage*;
Crowding the *Theater*, to show,
We scarcely Taxes feel or know;
Look down on *France*, who sink beneath
Oppressing Loads and hardly Breath;
Beholding us with envy while
We unconcern'd appear and Smile. [lines 105-16]

In an age when the national budget for culture was regarded throughout Europe as an index of national prestige and strength,¹³ the mention of taxes was topical and pertinent. Britain at the time of *Rinaldo* was weary of the war. *The British Apollo* patriotically reminded the nation that, unlike the French, it had enough liquidity, even after war taxation, to invest in culture.

WEARYING WAR

Some of Handel's audience would have been aware that the conduct of the war was a topical question, or rather questions. Should it be continued? If so, where? If not, what should the peace terms be? With whom should peace be made? How should a beneficial peace be gained – by continuing or by stopping military activity? Since spring 1709 it had been known that Louis XIV was 'suing desperately' for peace terms. In August 1710 the Tories ousted the Whigs, who had wanted war to continue in order to procure favourable terms (as did Handel's master, the Elector of Hanover). The Tories rightly perceived that the nation wanted peace, and began to negotiate in December 1710, but secretly, without the allies' knowledge. Discussions continued until September 1711, that is, until after *Rinaldo*'s composition and first season. It was only in April 1711, when the Emperor died, changing the political landscape, that debate about continuation became public.¹⁴

But at the time of *Rinaldo*'s inception the message to the nation at large was that the war should and would be prosecuted vigorously. On 25 November 1710 the Queen's speech at the opening of Parliament endorsed its continuation and requested further provision for it. On 30 November 1710 Sir Thomas Hanmer MP presented the Commons' reply:

Most gracious Sovereign; We ... are satisfied we lie under all possible obligations ... effectually and speedily to grant the necessary supplies for the vigorous prosecution of the war in all its parts, and especially in Spain ... and the same we shall continue to do, till such a peace may be obtained, as your majesty, in your royal wisdom, shall judge to be safe and honourable for your subjects, and all your allies.¹⁵

A week later the House of Commons resolved that 40,000 men should be employed in the naval armed forces during 1711; this at a time when the whole population of Great Britain was only six million.

Rinaldo can be seen to reflect and reprove the national war-weariness. In Handel's version of the story, Rinaldo himself, the hero without whom Jerusalem cannot be conquered, is an unwilling combatant.¹⁶ The whole first scene is about his reluctance to continue the campaign, for a purely selfish reason: he would rather stay with his fiancée Almirena. His heroic-sounding aria concluding Act I ('Venti, turbini') is not about leading the battle but

¹⁰ *The British Apollo*, 115 (15-18 December 1710), 2-3.

¹¹ Christine Gerrard, Aaron Hill: *The Muses' Projector, 1685-1750* (Oxford, 2003), 15-19.

¹² Lowell Lindgren, 'The Staging of Handel's Operas in London', *Handel Tercentenary Collection*, 93-119, at 95-6. *The British Apollo*, 108 (1-4 December 1710), had praised Hill for his plans to beautify the Haymarket, also in terms of patriotic one-upmanship: 'it will give a great Luster to our Nation, and doubtless the Fame of it, will bring many of Quality from Foreign Countries to behold ... the most Illustrious Theater in Europe' (Michael Tilmouth, *RMA Research Chronicle*, 1 (1961), 76).

¹³ T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789* (Oxford, 2003).

¹⁴ Geoffrey Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, rev. edn (London, 1983), 76-7; Heinz-Joachim Müllenbroch, *The Culture of Contention: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Public Controversy about the Ending of the War of the Spanish Succession, 1710-1713* (Munich, 1997), 36-7, 45; James O. Richards, *Party Propaganda under Queen Anne* (Athens, GA, 1972), 187.

¹⁵ *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, ed. William Cobbett, vol. 6: *AD 1702-1714* (London, 1810), 930-31.

¹⁶ As Price noted: 'English Traditions', 127-8.



about going to rescue Almirena. Eventually he is goaded by loss and humiliation into doing his duty. The opera is a *Bildungsroman* well suited to warning its audience what might happen to them if they stopped contributing to the war effort. Hill and Handel and their audience could have found a model in the previous English Armida opera. John Dennis's epilogue, addressing his audience, links the character of Rinaldo to the culpable unwillingness of some Britons, and the commendable readiness of others, to seek glory in William's wars against Louis XIV.¹⁷

COLONIAL WAR

A compelling reason to continue the War of the Spanish Succession was that its outcome would determine not only the European balance of power but also the growth of empire. The war was fought in North America as well as in Europe. At the time of *Rinaldo*'s composition and rehearsal, an action was being undertaken and reported in the British press which would have immense consequence, in that it opened the way for the British acquisition of Canada and signalled the beginning of the end of French power in North America. The successful siege of Port Royal (5-13 October 1710) by British regular and colonial forces marked the first British gain of a French colonial possession (renamed Annapolis Royal for Queen Anne) and the beginning of permanent British control over the peninsula of Nova Scotia (formerly Acadia). The siege has not previously been connected with the siege of Jerusalem in *Rinaldo*, but there are some remarkable parallels.¹⁸

In 1707 the governor of Massachusetts Bay, Joseph Dudley, having repeatedly and vainly requested London for support against raids directed from Port Royal, authorised an expedition that made two attempts to seize control from the French; both failed. In 1708 Queen Anne responded to lobbying by authorising a 'great enterprise' to conquer all of Acadia and Canada, but the promised military support did not materialise. In 1709 Francis Nicholson, previously colonial governor of Maryland and Virginia, came to England with the businessman Samuel Vetch, accompanied by four Iroquois (who caused a sensation in London),¹⁹ and appealed again to the queen, this time gaining ships and men, which combined with militia and ships from New England to make a viable force. Vetch led the attack from the north of the fort, Nicholson from the south, each (according to the published report) aiding the other. Port Royal capitulated within days.

Like Jerusalem in *Rinaldo*, Port Royal was a fortress on an eminence; its capture needed more than one attempt, and involved a siege; it was attacked from two sides by two uneasily collaborating commanders; its capture was given a religious tinge (Fast and Thanksgiving days were appointed); and its change of possession was politically decisive and was publicly recognised as a major event.

The siege took place while the Haymarket was being refurbished and it was widely reported in the London press. The report of the capitulation appeared, for example, in *The British Apollo* in the number preceding that which carried the poem about the Haymarket improvements, supplying credence for its scorn of French weakness.²⁰ Nicholson's journal of the campaign was serialised in the *Post Boy*'s thrice-weekly *Supplement* during January 1711, and published as a book later that year.²¹ His *Journal of an Expedition* includes descriptions of the deployment of siege machinery (compare the detail of the conduct of the siege in *Rinaldo* Act III).

I am not claiming that the siege of Port Royal influenced the conception or creation of, or is alluded to in, *Rinaldo*; the dates do not overlap in a way that would make that plausible. Besides, the siege of Port Royal was only one in a war that was characterised by sieges (ten in Europe alone). But any audience member of *Rinaldo* keeping up with war news would have seen a parallel and may have been amused, as may Handel and Hill, by the coincidence of the principal commander's name (Nicholson) chiming with that of the star who created the part of Rinaldo (Nicolini).

WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

For Hill, the Crusaders' war in Palestine had more reality than perhaps for any of Handel's audience, for he had actually been there. On leaving Westminster School he had spent an extended gap year (actually three: 1700-1703) touring the Middle East, where his relative Lord Paget was British ambassador to Constantinople until 1702.²² Then, as at the time of the First Crusade depicted in *Rinaldo*, and as at the time of *Rinaldo*'s composition and performance, Jerusalem was an Ottoman possession. The Ottoman empire – feared by western Europe until the end of World War I – was worryingly extensive, in 1711 including in its borders Greece, Hungary, Syria and Egypt as well as Palestine. The Turks had been at the gates of Vienna as recently as 1683. Handel's audience could have

17 Dennis, *Rinaldo and Armida*, Epilogue: 'some fine Sparks ... / While the late War in all it's fury Rag'd, / They ne're with Gauls in Belgian Plains Engag'd: / ... But you, who to your Country and your Fame, / Great Souls, still sacrific'd your Amorous Flame: / ... To follow William, forcing France to yield, / And hunting Glory thro' the Dusty Field: / You sure with Pleasure should Rinaldo view, / Who less deserves Immortal Fame than you'.

18 The following account derives mainly from John Grenier, *The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710-1760* (Norman, OK, 2008), 10-18; N. E. S. Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755* (Montreal, 2005), 195-251; Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia, PA, 2001), 40-67.

19 *The History of the Four Indian Kings from the Continent of America* (London, 1710); see Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest*, 53, for illustration.

20 *The British Apollo*, 114 (13-15 December 1710), 3.

21 *Journal of an Expedition performed by the Forces of Our Sovereign Lady Anne, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, &c. Under the Command of the Honourable Francis Nicholson, General and Commander in Chief, in the year 1710. For the Reduction of Port-Royal in Nova Scotia, or any other Place in those Parts in America, then in possession of the French* (London, 1711), 23.

22 Gerrard, Aaron Hill, 11-12.



accepted his opera as a patriotic work without the need of any analogy to give it relevance.

Hill had experienced at first hand the commercial exploitation of gullible Christian visitors to Jerusalem and the derelict condition of its sites and fabric. For him the need to rescue the city was real and urgent, as he made clear in a detailed account of his travels that he published by subscription in luxurious folio shortly before the inception of *Rinaldo*, and in which he devoted fifteen pages to a pungent report on Jerusalem.²³ He well knew that Jerusalem was on a hill, or, as he rightly says, on several hills.²⁴ In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where it survived until the nineteenth century, he saw the tomb of Godfrey of Bouillon, the Goffredo of *Rinaldo*, and transcribed the epitaph from it (in full capitals).²⁵ His account of Palestine ends with three pages on 'the present state of the Christian religion in Palestine', expressing distress: 'Twould be perhaps impossible, in Travelling about the spacious *Universe*, to find a *Scene*, more strangely shocking to a *Christian Zeal*, than what the *Holy Land* affords at *present*...'.²⁶

Handel had not ventured so far afield. But, unlike most of his audience, he had experienced the war in its European theatre, travelling the length of Italy when only Venice was uncommitted, and working for patrons aligned on either side. His cantata 'O come chiara e bella' (1708) marks Ruspoli's command of the defence of Ferrara in the papal cause against the Emperor, while the Duke of Alvito, for whose marriage in the same year Handel probably wrote *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, was pro-imperial.²⁷ Much of his music for *Rinaldo* was recycled from earlier works, but one of its new numbers shows his appreciation of the opera's British military reference. As others have noted, the Christian march in Act III was so readily identifiable as sounding thoroughly British that it was absorbed into *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), where it became so naturalised that Handel (evidently) felt the need to write a new march to replace it when he came to revive *Rinaldo* in 1731.

Handel's audience, even those who valued Tasso, might have imagined that the First Crusade was too long ago and too far away to mean much to them. *Rinaldo*, suggesting telling connections to topical concerns of the immediate present, may, as Price argued, and in even more ways than he enumerated, have given them more to relish than exquisite musical and scenic entertainment.

Ruth Smith

THE 35th LONDON HANDEL FESTIVAL

This remarkable festival, which was started by Denys Darlow in 1978 and is now directed by Laurence Cummings, goes from strength to strength. This year there were nearly thirty performances, ranging from major works such as the traditional *Matthew Passion* and two Handel operas, to small-scale concerts in various locations. Unfortunately, I was able to attend only four of them, so this account cannot be comprehensive; but these were major events that reached a high standard of excellence.

Riccardo primo, which had four performances in the Britten Theatre at the Royal College of Music, was the highlight for me – and not merely because my HHA edition was being used. It gives me great pleasure to report that not only were the singing of the two young casts (I saw both) and the playing of the London Handel Orchestra, conducted by Cummings, of the highest quality, but also the production was one of the best I have seen in over fifty years of attending staged performances of Handel operas. What horrors we have all endured, sitting through pretentious and often vulgar interpretations, defended by their directors as making the operas 'relevant to a modern audience', whatever that is supposed to mean!

Here the stage director, James Robert Carson, who gave an interesting talk about his production before the third performance, decided that (1) only such extras as are required for the action should be on stage when the principals are singing, (2) the principals should be allowed to sing with only those actions and gestures that are necessary to convey the dramatic sense, while everyone else on stage just stands or sits and listens, and (3) the music and the sung text should express what the composer and the librettist intended. In this production the European characters were dressed in eighteenth-century costumes and the Cypriots in vaguely Middle Eastern style; the sets were elegant, and the action was driven by the music and the plot.

I congratulated Carson on all this, although even he could not avoid adding a detail that gave a hint of a modernist interpretation. In the joyous final scene (the traditional *lieto fine*) the heroine Costanza was seen to faint as she ascended the throne with Richard, and then recovered. I was puzzled by this, and thought for a moment that the girl playing the part had actually passed out; but Carson explained that she was meant to be distressed, because the happiness she now enjoyed as a result of Richard's victory had been won at the cost of so many lives – a modern concept for which I rebuked the director (in the nicest possible way, of course).

The other opera was a magnificent concert performance at St George's of the 1712 version of *Il pastor fido*, given by La Nuova Musica, directed by David Bates (now available on CD). The only blemish for me was the frequent use of an organ for the continuo, which was a pity, but the performance answered an important question: could the performers make a work that scholars and critics have found disappointing (compared with its predecessor *Rinaldo*) seem like a masterpiece? They did, with flying colours.

The Finalists Showcase of the Handel Singing Competition was another enjoyable event. The young

²³ Ibid., 19-25; Aaron Hill, *A Full and Just Account of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire in all its Branches: With the Government, and Policy, Religion, Customs, and Way of Living of the Turks, in general. Faithfully Related from a Serious Observation, taken in many Years Travels thro' those Countries* (London, 1709), 275-90.

²⁴ *A Full and Just Account*, 276, 279. Price ('English Traditions', 126-7) comments on the frequency of 'hill' in the libretto of *Rinaldo*.

²⁵ *A Full and Just Account*, 286-7.

²⁶ Ibid., 299-301.

²⁷ On the war in Italy during Handel's time there, and the political activities of some of his Italian patrons, see Jonathan Keates, *Handel: The Man and His Music*, rev. edn (London, 2008), 23, 33 and 40-44.



performers were most impressive, and received an enthusiastic ovation from a packed St George's church.

Finally, there was a concert which was remarkable in that it featured two first performances of recently discovered versions of familiar Handel works: the concerto grosso in B flat, op. 3 no. 1, and the *Water Music*. The traditional text of the concerto – there is no autograph – has a finale that seems unsatisfactorily short, but a manuscript copy has surfaced in Dresden (and been published by two of our colleagues at the HHA in Halle), in which the finale has an extra 22 bars: they sound genuine to me and give the movement a more convincing form. The second half of the *Water Music* (the D-major and G-major/minor movements) was performed in the presumed original order as found in the manuscript copy of c. 1718 that was discovered in the archive of the Royal Society of Musicians in 2004 (see this *Newsletter*, vol. 16 no. 1) and has since been published in a revised HHA volume.

Laurence Cummings, who directed many of the performances with his usual skill and energy and his unerring instinct for how Handel's music should sound, is to be congratulated on an exceptionally fine festival.

Terence Best

THE HANDEL FESTIVALS IN GÖTTINGEN AND HALLE

This year's festivals were attended by both Terence Best and David Vickers, who therefore offer the following composite report.

GÖTTINGEN

[DV:] The Göttingen festival seems to be in safe hands, thanks to the new team of artistic director Laurence Cummings and *Intendant* Tobias Wolff (a former Cambridge choral scholar and possessor of an MBA). It kicked off with Handel's expanded 1732 version of *Esther* in the edition by Anthony Hicks first performed (and recorded) in London a decade ago. My subsequent research influenced a couple of small corrections adopted on this occasion, and the Göttingen soloists were generally superior, especially Iestyn Davies (Assuerus) and Carolyn Sampson (*Esther*). The excellent festival orchestra, founded a few years ago by Nicholas McGegan, is handpicked from the world's best baroque specialists, and it was good to see many of the regular San Franciscans returning to play enthusiastically under the new director. In recent years the NDR Choir has sounded worthy rather than inspiring in big oratorios, but on this occasion the singers appeared to enjoy themselves, and this transformed their sound. Cummings had told them to imagine that every time they looked down into the score for more than two seconds, somewhere a puppy would die. This did the trick.

Cummings's prior commitment to conduct an opera in Britain meant that *Amadigi* was directed by Andrew Parrott, who had previously rejected offers from various companies to conduct Handel opera because he wanted to

wait for a small enough theatre, to pick a cast intelligently (for musical reasons as well as dramatic appearances), and collaborate with a director possessing integrity and sensitivity to the baroque aesthetic. The stars aligned happily for Sigrid T'Hooft's beautifully sincere staging of *Amadigi*, which employed modern lighting and a few technical effects such as dry ice and strobe lighting during magic scenes but also featured mechanical scenery, (mostly) baroque costumes, and suitable choreography for a troupe of dancers (although there was a bit too much dancing in consecutive arias towards the end of Act I). Parrott's imaginative yet subtle conducting, the supreme quality of the orchestra and the visual attractiveness of the baroque-style staging combined to make a poignant impact.

The quartet of principal singers had been intensively coached in the use of gesture, and carried off the action without recourse to camped-up shenanigans (a risk in some earlier Göttingen productions of this type). The very young German mezzo-soprano Mareike Braun lacked the sort of bite and presence that Nicolini may have offered in 1715, but was admirably tasteful in a less-is-more approach to the title-role (the fountain scene that opens Act II was breathtakingly beautiful, thanks to its simplicity). Stefanie True's Oriana was impressive for her elegant and masterfully executed embellishments, and for her limpid tone; this winner of the London Handel Festival's Singing Competition is definitely one to watch. French soprano Judith Gauthier offered a steely-toned Melissa, not especially sweet in 'Ah! spietato! e non ti muove', but vividly theatrical and convincingly distinct in timbre and personality from Oriana (which is the whole point, of course). At several points the Czech alto Markéta Cukrová stole the show as the jealous Dardano; Parrott's judgment of 'Pena tiranna io sento al core' was perfectly understated, starting quietly with hopelessness and thus allowing the bassoon and oboe parts to weave emotively as the aria progressed.

[TB:] On my first visit to this pleasant town for ten years I heard only the last few concerts, but it was good to see and hear Laurence Cummings as the new musical director. Among other performances he gave a fine harpsichord recital in the large and elegant Aula of the University, played superbly on an excellent instrument whose sound filled the hall (often a problem with harpsichords). The programme was well chosen: two of Handel's suites from the 1720 collection (nos. 1 and 7), Frescobaldi's Toccata Quarta of 1615, a suite in C by Louis Couperin, uncle of the more famous François but a very fine composer in his own right (the passacaille that concludes this suite is one of the masterpieces of the genre), then François himself, his *Ordre* in B minor, which also ends with a splendid passacaille. A packed hall gave Cummings a well-deserved ovation. As an encore he gave what must be a 'first' in the long history of keyboard recitals: accompanying himself on the instrument, he sang 'Where'er you walk' in a most pleasing tenor voice, and it brought the house down.

A second concert in the same hall was described as



'Virtuoso Chamber Music by Handel and his Neapolitan Contemporaries'. It was performed by Maurice Steger, a virtuoso recorder-player – he can and does play faster than anybody else – accompanied by a theorbo doubling with baroque guitar, a cello and a harpsichord. There were very flashy renderings of sonatas by Hasse, Piccinini (1566–1638 – hardly contemporary with Handel), Lanzetti, Corelli (I don't think he was Neapolitan), Mancini and Handel, and a brilliant rendering on the harpsichord of William Babell's arrangement of 'Vo' far guerra' from *Rinaldo*, which made it sound almost a good piece. Babell figured also in the Corelli sonata, because the solo part was played in the Englishman's florid arrangement.

[DV:] Cummings took the helm again for the festival's conclusion – a semi-staged performance of *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* with dramatic action adapted from an old London Handel Festival production by Daniele Guerra. The trio of protagonists wore evening dress as if at a cocktail party. Gillian Ramm's slender Aci in tails was swamped by last-minute stand-in Hilary Summers as Galatea in an evening gown (Christine Rice had withdrawn because of illness). Antonio Abete's black tie became dishevelled as Polifemo's envious anger grew, and he frequently pointed a gun around (a cliché that should be used more sparingly). The action took place all around the auditorium of the Stadthalle, with Cummings and the orchestra rightly centre-stage. The music was finely performed, with judicious tempi and pacing, superb playing and generally fine singing; Abete struggled a little as Polifemo, but what mortal bass would not?

The tradition since the 1980s of a top-class British artistic director looks to be secure, and with the festival's centenary looming there is talk of an ambitious plan to perform all the operas of Handel that have not yet featured in the festival's distinguished history.

HALLE

[TB:] Protestant Germany is celebrating a 'Luther Decade', which began in 2008 and will culminate in the 500th anniversary of his famous declaration of faith in the ninety-five theses nailed to the door of the church in Wittenberg. The theme of this year's scholarly conference was therefore 'Handel and the Confessions', inviting discussion of his music for both Protestant and Catholic occasions.

The opening concert in the G. F. Händel-Halle was given, as usual, by the Händelfestspielorchester, conducted by Bernhard Forck, with the distinguished mezzo-soprano Bernarda Fink as soloist. The programme was more interesting than in some recent years, with a judicious mixture of instrumental and vocal numbers: Handel's F-major organ concerto (HWV 295, 'The Cuckoo and the Nightingale'), a fine concerto by Vivaldi (RV 565), and vocal items for Fink that reflected Handel's music for the two religious affiliations – arias from *Theodora* and the Roman 'Ah, che troppo ineguali' (HWV 230), pleasantly balanced by Pergolesi's charming *Salve regina* and Vivaldi's motet *Invicti bellate*. From where I

was sitting, Fink's voice sounded rather muted, but she came to vigorous life in her encore, another aria from *Theodora*. The orchestral playing and that of the soloist in the Handel concerto was fine.

A highlight of the festival was a stunning performance of the 1742 version of *Messiah*, conducted by John Butt, with six British soloists and the Dunedin Consort and Players. The great work was given as fine a rendering as one could dream of, by a modest-sized orchestra and a superb choir of only eight, joined by the soloists in authentic historical fashion. Even in the vast space of the Marktkirche the sound was thrilling and fully justified the modern custom of small-choir performance.

The same church was the setting for another fine offering, *Joshua*, with four excellent soloists – the British singers Elisabeth Watts, Thomas Hobbs and Robert Williams, and the German contralto Wiebke Lehmkuhl. The excellent choir was the RIAS Kammerchor, whose English diction was exemplary, and the orchestra was the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin. Although *Joshua* is not one of the most highly regarded of the oratorios (see Winton Dean, *passim*), the excellence of the performance made one think 'this is really a good piece'.

Another good piece is *Alcina*, this year's new opera staging. This opera should be difficult to spoil, and it was very well sung and played by a good team of soloists and the Händelfestspielorchester, with the great Romelia Lichtenstein in the title-role. However (here we go again), we sighed as the scene opened with some antics on stage by Alcina's minions as screaming school kids, followed by much activity in a swimming pool; indeed, most of the cast got rather wet during the proceedings. The production was proudly advertised in the programme book as a 'zweiaktige Spielfassung' by the producers Roland Quitt and Andrej Woron, but it was not a performance in which Handel's carefully constructed three acts were reduced to two by placing an interval midway through Act II, as so often, alas, happens these days. Oh no, the movements were randomly (so it seemed) re-arranged into a new order, so that, for example, Morgana's 'Tornami a vagheggiar', which so spectacularly ends Handel's Act I, did not turn up until Act II.

You will not be surprised to read, also, that the silly and tiresome trick of distracting the audience from the supposed tedium of listening to a da capo aria, however exquisite, meant that various extras, both human and mechanical, filled the stage with nonsense a lot of the time. Most outrageous, in my view, was a plastic inflatable fish that floated on over the stage and out over the heads of the audience, some of whom were gazing at it and laughing ('Oh look, a fish!') while one of the opera's loveliest arias, Morgana's 'Credete al mio dolore', with its exquisite cello solo, was being beautifully sung by Ines Lex at the edge of the pool (now, apparently, a fishpond). I had thought that Handel opera productions were moving away from this sort of thing (see my review of the London *Riccardo primo*, above), so it was most disappointing to see old habits dying hard. At least we were spared any



messing about with the animals into which Alcina had turned her guests: its absence was a relief but did not make up for the rest.

[DV:] In addition to *Alcina*, two other events proudly proclaimed use of material from the HHA but misrepresented the scores. A concert performance of Graham Cummings's edition of *Poro* was certainly not a faithful interpretation of Handel's drama, the violinist-director Enrico Onofri and star countertenor Franco Fagioli seeming to do everything they could to make the evening less about Metastasio's serious plot. Only a few of the all-star cast appeared to have a clue what they were singing about, to whom, in response to what, or why. Crucial dramatic moments passed without regard for words or context. For example, the quarrelling duet between Poro and Cleofide – in which each character expresses sarcasm and bitterness by ironically quoting the other's earlier love music – was presented by Fagioli and Veronica Cangemi with affectionate smiles that conveyed utter ignorance of what should have been going on. There were also irritating musical miscalculations: Onofri and Fagioli mangled Poro's sublime 'Senza procelle ancora' by taking it at almost double speed in an attempt to make Handel's gentle use of horns (paired with pastoral recorders) seem like heroic military music, and Poro's icy anger in 'Dov'è? s'affretti' was wrecked by Fagioli's absurd cadenza, which lasted about three minutes (nearly as long as the aria itself). Disregard for dramatic pacing, characterisation and Handel's musical style was commonplace. Other members of the cast did what they could to fix the situation: James Gilchrist sang Alessandro marvellously and seemed genuinely interested in the character; Sonia Prina was on good form as Erissena ('Son confusa pastorella' was finely done). Onofri's direction from the violin tended to be at its best when he was on *terra firma* in string-based ritornelli, but his determination to conduct badly in every bar of simple recitative became tedious.

Terence Best's edition of *La Resurrezione* also received rough treatment from Wolfgang Katschner and Die Lautten Compagny. There were frequent changes to orchestration, recorders being used far more often than Handel indicated. The HHA edition established that Handel removed the jagged violin figures from San Giovanni's lovely 'Cosi la tortorella', but Katschner put them back in, thus suggesting little more than lip service to the HHA. Moreover, the clumsiness of his frequently rapid tempi was a real pity, because the singing was generally good and the multimedia staging by Kobie van Rensburg, at Bad Lauchstädt, was clever, imaginative, witty and surprisingly respectful to the Easter message. I had not felt so optimistic at the interval – a drag-queen Lucifer barging through the audience not only provoked cheap laughs but also made me fear that every bit of religious imagery would be ridiculed – but in the event the effective singing and overall good intentions of the production won me over. The Angel walking serenely amongst the audience, smiling gorgeously and handing out sweets, was another

evocation of pantomime, but it combined with the elaborate digital scenery to bring to mind a 2012 version of Ruspoli's lavish entertainment on Easter Sunday 1708.

Bad Lauchstädt also hosted a production of *Terpsicore*, with pseudo-baroque dancing provided by the Compagnie Fêtes Galantes. Christophe Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques offered the best orchestral playing I heard during the festival. The short entertainment was fleshed out with a few extra dances by Rebel, but at times the occasion felt like Rebel without a cause. The original ballet-prologue of 1734 was designed for Carestini, Strada and Sallé to share the stage and present a story about Apollo and the Muses, but this vital aspect was undermined by the placing of the soprano and alto soloists (and small chorus) in the orchestra pit: they could not be heard clearly or take part in the action, and their words were seemingly irrelevant to the monotonous circular motions of the exquisitely costumed team of six dancers (from which no Sallé-like soloist emerged). Though beautiful in several ways, this seemed like a missed opportunity.

[TB:] The Marktkirche hosted a fine concert by the Rheinische Kantorei, with soloists, accompanied by Das Kleine Konzert under Hermann Max. The first half was devoted to four excellent cantatas by Handel's teacher Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, whose church this was; one of them was said in the programme note to have survived in a copy by the young Handel, described as his 'erstes Autograph'. This is fine, well-written music in the late seventeenth-century North German style, and it must have done much to teach the boy how to write fluently and effectively for both instruments and voices. The second half was the young man's astonishing *Dixit Dominus*, which came over as powerfully as ever, though some of it was too fast for my taste. Handel had learned his art well, and the wonderful 'De torrente in via bibet', in which he shows his new mastery of the Italian style, had its usual effect of reducing me to tears.

The scholarly conference was well attended, many of the papers were of high quality, and the sacred works of Zachow and Buxtehude (among others), as well as those of Handel, were discussed. The Anglo-American contingent made a significant contribution, with papers by Donald Burrows on the Chapel Royal anthems and Michael Lloyd on Handel's theology, and John Roberts offering a convincing explanation for the Latin motet *Silete venti* having been composed in 1724 for Cuzzoni to sing in Paris. Katie Hawks discussed the versions of *The Triumph of Time and Truth*, Graydon Beeks the selection of anthem texts for Cannons, Matthew Gardner the borrowings between the oratorios and the two Wedding Anthems, and David Vickers the use of the 1727 coronation music in *Esther* and *Deborah*, while the American scholar Stephen Nissenbaum explained 'How Handel's *Messiah* became a Christmas Tradition'.

As ever, there were splendid things on offer in Halle, and they did justice to its favourite son.



CONFERENCE ON 'HANDEL AT COURT'

London, Friday 23 to Sunday 25 November 2012

This Handel Institute conference begins with a private view of the Charles Jennens exhibition at the Handel House Museum, 25 Brook Street, W1K 4HB, and continues with paper sessions at The Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square, WC1N 1AZ.

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

Friday 23 November, Handel House Museum

6.00 pm Private View of exhibition on Charles Jennens, curated by Ruth Smith

Saturday 24 November, The Foundling Museum

9.15 am *Registration*

10.00 **Donald Burrows:** The Hanoverians and the Maxwells: George I and II in London society, and how this affected Handel

10.40 **Rashid-Sascha Pegah:** London insights

11.20 *Coffee*

11.50 **Konstanze Musketa:** Between the courts: Handel's first appointment as Organist at the Halle 'Schloss- und Domkirche'

12.30 pm **John Roberts:** The Queen's anthem and the Emperor's madrigals

1.10 *Buffet lunch*

2.30 **Helen Green:** Musical patronage at the Hanover court during the early eighteenth century

3.10 **William Summers:** Music and royal power struggles, 1716-1721

3.30 **Graydon Beeks:** Handel at Cannons: Music for a private court

4.10 *Tea*

4.40 **Terence Best:** *Riccardo primo*: An opera for a royal occasion

5.20 **Liam Gorry:** 'A golden throne on one side': Handel's representation of throne rooms in his operas for London

6.30 *Dinner at La Strada, in The Brunswick Centre*

Sunday 25 November, The Foundling Museum

10.00 am **Graham Cummings:** Handel and operatic rivalry in the London season 1733/34

10.40 **Matthew Gardner:** Sourcing singers for English oratorio: Handel and his contemporaries

11.20 *Coffee*

11.50 **David Hunter:** In the court of public opinion: Handel, choice, and the finite audience

12.30 pm **Annette Landgraf:** Handel amongst the nobility in German belletristic literature

1.10 *Buffet lunch*

3.00 **An Arcadian *Conversazione*: Handel in Rome**
A concert given by recent graduates of British conservatoires, organised by Laurence Cummings and David Vickers

ABBREVIATED ABSTRACTS

The full abstracts will be printed in the conference programme booklet.

Graydon Beeks draws on information that has come to light since the publication of his 'Handel and Music for the Earl of Carnarvon' (1985) to review what is now known (or can be deduced) about the position of music at Cannons and the nature and extent of Handel's role in it. He also attempts to clarify the composer's relations with John Christopher Pepusch, who was active at Cannons during Handel's time there and became Director of Music after his presumed departure in early 1719.

Terence Best discusses the genesis of *Riccardo primo*, which was composed by 16 May 1727 but not performed until November. The opera may have been intended for the end of the 1726/27 season, but the theatre closed prematurely following a riot at a performance on 6 June and the unexpected death of George I. With the prospect of a new king in the autumn, Handel already had the draft of an opera that could be adapted to celebrate British royalty and the Hanoverian dynasty. This paper explores how the work was rewritten for the purpose.

Donald Burrows looks at the relationships of George I and George II with London society (interpreted as the social groupings that had contact with the British court), paying particular attention to their interest in the London theatres, the 'language problem', the diverse nature of the opposition that they faced, the interaction of British and Hanoverian personnel, local geographical factors such as the use of different residences, and wider European issues – all of which were relevant to Handel's experience of the court.



Graham Cummings investigates the reasons for the foundation of a new Italian opera company in London in 1733, and its relation to Handel's company, and presents possible explanations for the hostility towards Handel and his music that led to four seasons of financially destructive competition between him and the so-called 'Opera of the Nobility'. With reference to the first season (1733/34), factors such as patronage (both royal and noble), audience support, musical personalities, repertoire and performance days, will be discussed.

Matthew Gardner explores how Handel and his contemporaries, especially Greene and Boyce, sourced singers for their oratorio performances, primarily in the 1730s and early 1740s. Reference is made to: the restrictions on Chapel Royal singers performing outside the court; the advantages to a composer of holding a court position when recruiting singers; how the different types of singers available to Greene and Handel may have affected their compositional processes, and the use of singers, especially from the Chapel Royal, in performances of secular English works such as odes and pastoral masques.

Liam Gorry examines how Handel uses throne-room scenes to create climactic moments in his operas for London. He investigates how, within these scenes, the composer presents both illegitimate régimes and legitimate régimes through his music. Also discussed is Handel's representation of supernatural throne-room scenes, and of the throne-room scene as a vehicle for justice or injustice.

Helen Green draws on materials housed in the Hanover Hauptstaatsarchiv (and builds on earlier studies) to present a re-evaluation of musical patronage at the Hanoverian court during the early eighteenth century. Her paper provides insights into the circumstances surrounding Handel's appointment there, as well as into the role of Hanover within the network of musical personnel in Europe at that time.

David Hunter reports on the choices made by individuals when deciding whether to attend performances put on by Handel or other musicians. By improving our understanding of the court of public opinion we can escape simple-minded praise or blame of audiences and see why the composer said, of an opera production by Geminiani that competed with his oratorio season, that 'he might not obstruct any bodys entertainment and for his own part trusts to the kindness of his patrons' (Earl of Shaftsbury to James Harris, 12 February 1745).

Annette Landgraf The first German story about Handel appeared in 1834, but it was Chrysander's biography of the composer (1858–67) that prompted the publication of several novels about him. Their authors drew on anecdotes that had been passed down by Mainwaring, Mattheson, Burney and Coxe. This paper focuses on those anecdotes that illustrate Handel's relationship to members of the nobility, considering the authors' sources, the picture of Handel that emerges and the relation between fact and fantasy.

Konstanze Musketa examines: Handel's and his father's contacts with the courts of Halle, Weissenfels and Berlin; the background of Handel's appointment and duties as organist at Halle (according to his contract); the role of the Halle 'Schloss- und Domkirche' as an official church of the Berlin government; and, drawing on documents found recently in the Domarchiv, the contacts between the Handel family and the Calvinist parish there.

Rashid-Sascha Pegah sheds light on remarks made by Handel in conversation with a European visitor to London in the 1740s. The comments are preserved in the unpublished diary notes of this foreigner, who met the composer on at least two occasions. The paper also explores the visitor's accounts of trips to the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres and to a ball and concerts at court, and his notes on the very private life of a member of the Middlesex family – possibly the one who supported Handel but later set up his own company.

John H. Roberts In 1703 Antonio Lotti presented to Emperor Leopold I a collection of madrigals. Published two years later, they were widely admired and sometimes appropriated by other composers. Bononcini tried to pass one off as his own but got caught; Vivaldi adapted sections from two of them for a psalm and a serenata. Handel, too, borrowed from the collection: two movements in 'As pants the hart' (HWV 251a, c. 1712) are based on Lotti's 'Lamento di tre amanti'. These borrowings, and others, reveal that in his first essay in English church music Handel relied to a surprising extent on secular models of foreign origin.

HANDEL WEBSITE RELAUNCHED

We are pleased to announce that *gfhandel.org* has recently been relaunched. Founded by American Handel Society alumnus Brad Leissa soon after the birth of the worldwide web, *gfhandel.org* had long been in need of restructuring, redesign and updating. The new-look website, which received assistance from The Handel Institute, will be operated by David Vickers, who designed it in collaboration with Duncan Fielden. It is now freely available online at <http://www.gfhandel.org/> and it is hoped that different kinds of Handelian will all find it useful.

It will take time for old mistakes to be identified and fixed, so any assistance with spotting gremlins or suggesting content will be gratefully received, along with news items and information on academic projects, conferences and musical undertakings. It is hoped in due course to include a selective list of opera and concert performances world-wide (for which David will need tip-offs from everyone). Meanwhile, the website's pages devoted to The Handel Institute, New Recordings of Handel's music, Recent Publications, and much else, are up to date and make for interesting browsing. David can be emailed about the website at info@gfhandel.org.

NEW HANDEL MANUSCRIPT AT COKE COLLECTION

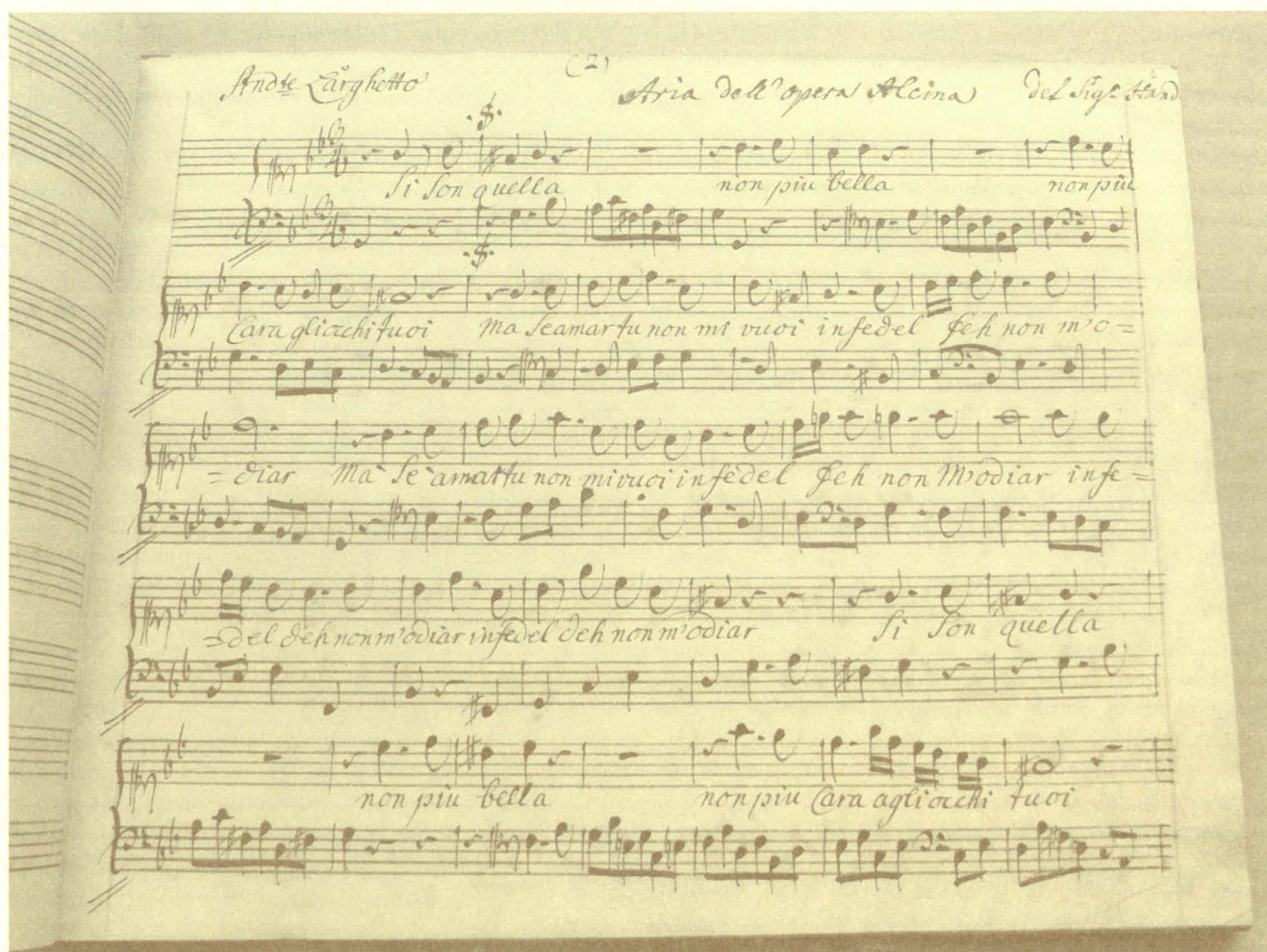


Fig 2: G. F. Handel, arias and trio from *Alcina* and *Ariodante*, c. 1735 (Gerald Coke Handel Collection, 7274). Purchased with the aid of a grant from the Friends of the National Libraries.

With the help of a generous grant from the Friends of the National Libraries, the Gerald Coke Handel Foundation at The Foundling Museum recently acquired a volume containing fourteen arias and a trio from Handel's operas *Alcina* and *Ariodante*. The manuscript, which was previously unknown, bears an ownership label dating from 1735, when both operas were first performed (at Covent Garden), making it one of the earliest known sources for

both works. The movements from *Alcina* appear to have been copied by the scribes known as S1 and S3, those from *Ariodante* possibly by S4. The Gerald Coke Handel Collection has portraits of the singers Anna Maria Strada del Po, John Beard and Gustavus Waltz, who took the leading roles in the premières. For more information see: www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk/collections/gerald-coke-handel-collection/